

**STATE OF MICHIGAN**  
**COURT OF APPEALS**

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In the Matter of BRIANA JEATICE BRYANT,  
Minor.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

TEFFARRA FARROW,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

ROBERT BRYANT,

Respondent.

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In the Matter of ALAN DAVID HENDERSON II,  
Minor.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

TEFFARRA FARROW,

Respondent-Appellant.

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UNPUBLISHED

August 12, 2004

No. 253736

Saginaw Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 02-027958-NA

No. 253737

Saginaw Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 03-028625-NA

In the Matter of J'SON ANWAR FARROW,  
Minor.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

TEFFARRA FARROW,

Respondent-Appellant.

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No. 253738  
Saginaw Circuit Court  
Family Division  
LC No. 02-027959-NA

Before: Hoekstra, P.J., and Cooper and Kelly, JJ.

PER CURIAM.

In these consolidated appeals, respondent-appellant appeals as of right from the orders terminating her parental rights to the minor children under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i) and (g). We affirm. This appeal is being decided without oral argument pursuant to MCR 7.214(E).

The two older children, Briana and J'Son, were removed from respondent-appellant's care after J'Son, who had sickle cell anemia, was admitted to the hospital. Respondent-appellant admitted to the allegations in the petition, including that J'Son had not received the necessary medical care to treat his disease, and the court found that respondent-appellant had medically neglected J'Son, and that the children were without proper care and custody, and assumed jurisdiction over the children. Respondent-appellant gave birth to Alan during the pendency of this case, and he was removed from her care when she refused to hold, feed or care for him, and ignored the newborn child.

Respondent-appellant does not challenge the trial court's determination that statutory grounds for termination of her parental rights were established by clear and convincing evidence, but argues only that the trial court erred in terminating her parental rights because termination was clearly not in the best interests of the children. "Once a ground for termination is established, the court must issue an order terminating parental rights unless there exists clear evidence, on the whole record, that termination is not in the child's best interests." *In re Trejo Minors*, 462 Mich 341, 354; 612 NW2d 407 (2000); MCL 712A.19b(5). This Court reviews the trial court's determination regarding the child's best interests for clear error. *In re Trejo, supra* at 356-357. A finding is clearly erroneous if, although there is evidence to support it, this Court is left with a definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been made. *In re JK*, 468 Mich 202, 209-210; 661 NW2d 216 (2003).

After review of the entire record, we are not left with a definite and firm conviction that the trial court made a mistake in determining that termination of respondent-appellant's parental rights was in the children's best interests.<sup>1</sup> *In re JK, supra* at 209-210. There was some testimony that provided support for a finding that termination was clearly not in the children's best interests. For example, respondent-appellant was slowly making progress towards reunification by regularly attending, and showing improvement in, mental health counseling and parenting classes; respondent-appellant loved her children and a bond existed between respondent-appellant and her older children, and she had a home, part-time employment and now understood the children's medical needs. However, there was also testimony that respondent-appellant could not care for herself and the children without the assistance of the foster mother, that she lacked a suitable bond or emotional attachment to her children, and she had not made enough progress in services to parent the children and meet their emotional needs. In addition, there was testimony that the children had benefited from being in the foster mother's care. Respondent-appellant contends that she should have been given more time to work towards reunification with her children. However, respondent-appellant's slow progress and her history of failing to adequately care for herself and her children, considered with testimony that given the tender age of the children it was crucial and in the children's best interests to have a clear, permanent plan and a sense of stability, we find that the trial court did not clearly err in terminating respondent-appellant's parental rights instead of delaying permanency for the children. *In re Trejo, supra* at 364.

Affirmed.

/s/ Joel P. Hoekstra  
/s/ Jessica R. Cooper  
/s/ Kirsten Frank Kelly

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<sup>1</sup> The court went beyond the best interest inquiry under MCL 712A.19b(5). The statute does not require that the court affirmatively find that termination is in the children's best interests. *In re Trejo, supra* at 364 n 19.